DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 071 TM 002 890

AUTHOR Ramirez, A. R.; And Others
TITLE An Evaluative Study of the ROCK English as a Second Language Program in Spanish-English Bilingual Projects.
NOTE 5p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education; Communication Skills; Elementary School Students; *English (Second Language); *Mexican Americans; Phonology; Preschool Children; *Program Evaluation; Pronunciation; Second Language Learning; Spanish Speaking; Syntax; Teaching Techniques; Technical Reports; Test Results; Vocabulary

ABSTRACT

Bilingual education programs for Mexican-American preschool and elementary grade pupils almost invariably include instruction in English as a second language (ESL). While usual ESL programs for young Spanish-speaking children emphasize pronunciation drill (minimal-pair drills: pit-bit, choose-shoes), an alternative approach deemphasizes phonological drill while concentrating on teaching of word order (syntactic structure). Results of several studies from bilingual projects in Lower Rio Grande Valley replicate findings that Experimental Groups perform no better than Control (no formal ESL instruction) Groups on Pronunciation, Vocabulary, and Communication but score significantly higher on structure. Formal syntactical drill to learn new word order may be more important than phonological analyses in ESL instruction. (Author)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Bilingual Education Project
Region One Education Service Center
101 S. Tenth Street
Edinburg, Texas 78539

ED 078071

An Evaluative Study of the ROCK English as a Second Language Program in Spanish-English Bilingual Projects

A. R. Ramirez and Mary E. Salinas, Bilingual Education Project,
Region One Education Service Center, Edinburg, Texas;
Paul G. Liberty, Jr., Measurement and Evaluation Cneter,
The University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

TM 002 890

SUMMARY

Objectives: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title VII, has promoted the development of bilingual education programs, or projects, in the schools. Evaluative studies of the results of bilingual programs, or the various components of these programs, have not been generally available. This paper presents results of several studies investigating the effectiveness of the ROCK English as a Second Language (ESL) materials, a widely-used basic oral English language program designed for preschool and elementary grade pupils in the Southwest whose native language is Spanish. (Although conceptual approaches to bilingual education vary considerably, virtually all bilingual programs include some form of ESL instruction.) Additionally, this paper will relate the findings to various approaches of ESL instruction.

Methods and Data Sources: The ROCK (Region One Curriculum Kit) materials consist of (a) 126 language lessons, originally written at UCLA in the early 1960s, under auspices of the National Center for the Study of Linguistics and termed the H-200 series, plus, (b) newly-developed procedures and materials that provide practice in learning of language patterns and that reinforce the patterns being learned, and (c) an extensive set of teacher training materials. The H-200 materials were written by linguists on the basis that the lessons "represented the basic oral English skills needed by non-native English language speakers to traverse the existing Anglo school system."

The learning performances of Mexican-American pupils in various Experimental (ESL) Groups during the 1969-71 school years are compared with those of Mexican-American pupils in Control (no formal ESL instruction) Groups on a test of oral English production. The MTOEP (Michael Test of Oral English Language Production) was used. The MTOEP possesses adequate content validity for assessing performance in spoken English within the range of verbal behavior covered by the H-200 and similar ESL materials. Four scales are included in the MTOEP: Communication, Structure, Pronunciation, and Vocabulary, plus a total score. Reliability of scoring of test tapes is achieved by training sessions in which scorers and administrators must attain 95% scoring accuracy on a set of 5 sample tapes, that vary in scoring difficulty and that also point up administrative problems.

Schools in which the ROCK materials have been primarily employed are in communities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas where 70-85% of the total population is Mexican-American. In each of the first two studies to be reported, random samples of pupils (all Mexican-American) were drawn and tested at the end of the year. Control pupils were selected either from non-experimental classrooms in the same schools or from comparable classrooms in nearby schools. The vast majority of pupils speak little or no English at the start of school but a brief 10-12 item oral interview questionnaire is used as a check. Since the pupils in the studies speak little or no English, a pretest of the MTOEP is not given at ESL, Level I. At ESL Level II, (Study 3), pupils are tested pre and post. MTOEP is tape-recorded, individually administered test. Testing time: 20-25 minutes.

Analyses and Results: Analyses of variance were performed to determine difference between experimental and control groups means on the MTOEP scales.

Study 1: Subjects were 80 preschool or first grade Mexican-American pupils who had completed the first year, or level, of the ROCK Program in the Spring of 1969.

Study 2: Similar study, Spring, 1970.

Study 3: Pilot study of Results at ROCK Level II (second year level). During school year 1979-70. During this development year, very small N's were tested.) Pupils here were in their second year of school, whether that be first or second grade. Results are shown in Table 3. Both pre and post tests are given at Level II.

Study 4: Data from 1970-71 school year, utilizing a newly-developed Phone-Test to assess ESL structure learning, indicate ROCK (Experimental Group) children at both Levels I and II score significantly higher ($P = <.001$) than Control pupils with ability level (measured by Goodenough Draw-A-Man) partialed out. Analysis of covariance was used to statistically adjust for any group differences in ability and pretest means. At Level I, no ability score differences were found between groups and end-of-year means were 20.1 for the Experimental Group and 9.7 for the Control Group ($P=.001$). The results of Level II are shown in Figure 1. Analysis of covariance (pretest score being covariate) over all ESL II pupils showed the Experimental Group to score significantly higher than the Control pupils ($P=.001$).

Conclusions: Various analyses have shown the ROCK ESL Program, Levels I and II, to produce significant language learning where compared to pupils engaged in regular classrooms with no particular format for ESL instruction. The results of the MTOSP and Phone (Structure) Test show that the primary differences between ROCK youngsters and non-ROCK pupils is in the control of syntactic structures. (The studies reported here replicate and expand upon results previously reported.[1]) Paper will also cite some preliminary results comparing ROCK programs with other ESL programs in various educational/community settings in Texas and New Mexico. "Structure", again, accounts for differences in results; some considerations will be given to differences in the types of communities where ESL learning occurs as topics for further study.

The major importance of study for bilingual education and ESL instruction to young children particularly concerns the importance of emphasizing syntactic structures. Pronunciation and Vocabulary skills are seemingly as well known by youngsters outside the ESL programs as those who have received special instruction. On the other hand, Structure is crucial because English sentence patterns are not readily learned. Although some linguists and school administrators would resist the deemphasis in pronunciation (e.g. pit vs. bit--a slight phonemic change) through "minimal pair" drills and vocabulary skills training (e.g. picture identification), it may be that younger children may not need much phonological drill. Phonics analysis may be useful, however, for older learners of ESL since they have better developed speech patterns and this drill may serve to override established speech habit patterns. Perhaps we have been applying language teaching strategies to children that are more relevant for teaching adults and older children. This evaluative report suggests this to be the case, that syntactic structure drill is the most crucial ESL area, and urges similar studies be done in other and various types of ESL programs with attention to the various types of communities where proportionally more or less English and Spanish are spoken.

---

[1] Ramirez, A.R. and Liberty, P.G. An evaluative study of instructional strategies and pupil cognitive learning in an ESL program. Paper presented at NCME Annual Convention, Chicago, Illinois, February, 1972.

APPENDIX

Table 1: MTOEP Results

	Experimental Group Mean (N=40)	Control Group Mean (N=40)	P
Communication	70.07	67.50	NS
Structure	50.23	32.39	.001
Vocabulary	50.00	47.62	NS
Pronunciation	24.05	23.99	NS
Total	195.35	171.50	.001

Table 2: MTOEP Results

	Experimental Group Mean (N=183)	Control Group Mean (N=21)	P
Communication	70.13	69.05	NS
Structure	50.45	33.31	.001
Vocabulary	50.10	48.00	NS
Pronunciation	24.01	22.96	NS
Total	194.69	173.32	.001

Table 3: MTOEP Results

	Experimental Group Mean Scores (Rounded) (N=29)		Control Group Mean Scores (Rounded) (N=15)	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Communication	49	53	37	48
Structure	26	39	13	21
Vocabulary	30	33	29	34
Pronunciation	26	31	25	30
Total	131	157	104	131

FIGURE 1

Means for ESL Level II Pretest and Post Test Scores

FIRST GRADE STUDENTS

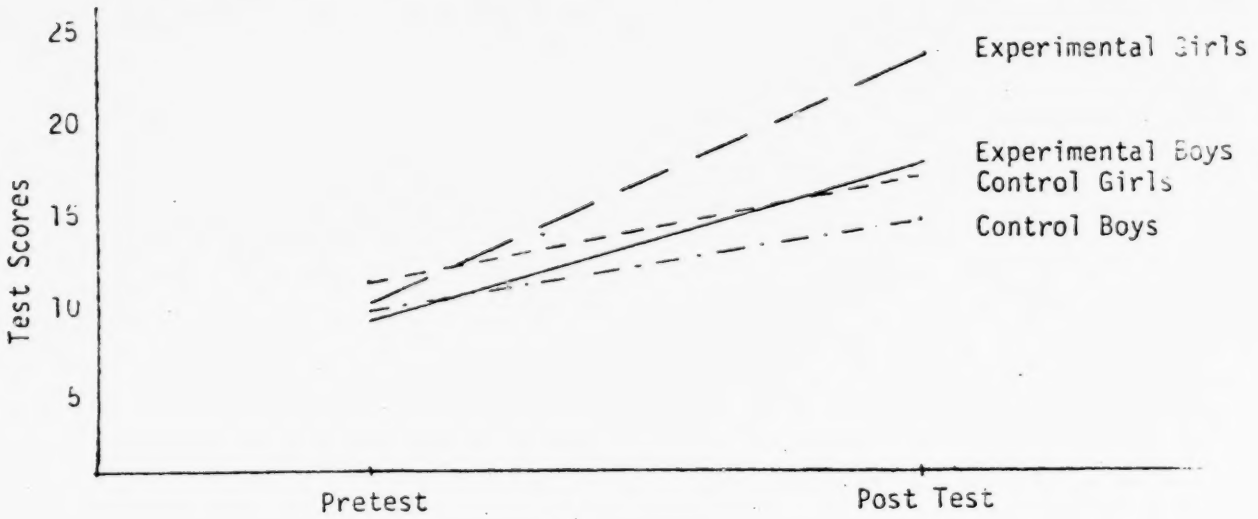
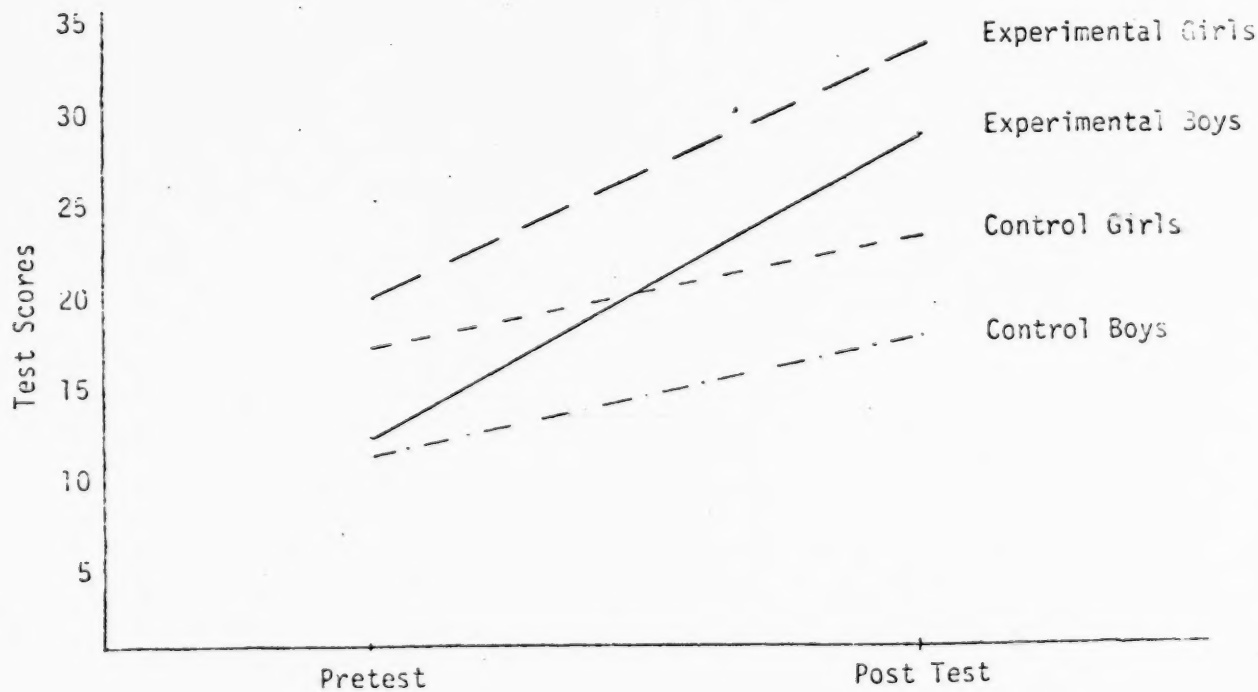


FIGURE 2

Means for ESL Level II Pretest and Post Test Scores

SECOND GRADE STUDENTS



An Evaluative Study of the ROCK English as a Second Language Program in Spanish-English Bilingual Projects

A. R. Ramirez, Director, Bilingual Education Project,
Region One Education Service Center, Edinburg, Texas;
Paul G. Liberty, Jr., Measurement and Evaluation Center,
The University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

ABSTRACT

Bilingual education programs for Mexican-American preschool and elementary grade pupils almost invariably include instruction in English as a second language (ESL). While usual ESL Programs for young Spanish-speaking children emphasize pronunciation drill (minimal-pair drills: pit-bit, choose-shoes), an alternative approach deemphasizes phonological drill while concentrating on teaching of word order (syntactic structure). Results of several studies from bilingual projects in Lower Rio Grande Valley replicate findings that Experimental Groups perform no better than Control (no formal ESL instruction) Groups on Pronunciation, Vocabulary, and Communication but score significantly higher on Structure! Formal syntactical drill to learn new word order may be more important than phonological analyses in ESL instruction.

[Vital question: "Are children being exposed to ESL language teaching strategies that are redundant and more relevant for adults and older children?" A need exists for comparative ESL evaluative research in different communities.]